Centre in the States and Union Territories where such Centre does not exist.

Amendment of the Rehabilitation Council of India Act

3597. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention have been drawn to a news-item appeared in "The Times of India", New Delhi edition dated 27th May, 1998 under the caption "NGOs urge Government to withdraw impractical clauses" of the Rehabilitation Council of India Act; and

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An Expert Committee has been constituted to look into the various provisions of the Rehabilitation Council of India Act requiring amendments.

Central Assistance for Special Component Plan for SC

3598. SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scheme of special central assistance of Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes is under implementation for the last five years;

(b) whether the evaluation of the scheme is conducted from time to time; and

(c) the number of persons who had been covered under these schemes, particularly people of remote area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Two Research Studies on utilisation of Special Central Assistance one in U.P. and the other in Rajasthan covering the period 1992—96 have already been got conducted. Evaluation Studies of Special Central Assistance funded schemes in 7 States have been entrusted to National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad and Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai in March, 1998.

(c) 119.79 lakhs SC families including families in rural/remote areas in 24 States/UTs have been covered under various economic development schemes/ programmes for SCs during the last five years.

Special Central Assistance for SCs in Maharashtra

3599. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are providing special central assistance to Special Component Plan for Scheduled Castes of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years, year-wise;

(c) in what way the plan has helped the Scheduled Castes of the State; and

(d) the other welfare measures being taken by Government for the Scheduled Castes in Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The details of Special Central Assistance released during the last three years are given below: